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FRENCH'S
AMERICAN DRAMA.
NO. 99.

MY WIFE'S MIRROR:

A
COMEDY, IN ONE ACT,

BY

ED. G. P. WILKINS.

*With Cast of Characters, Stage Business, Costumes, Relative
Positions, etc. etc.*

AS PERFORMED AT THE PRINCIPAL THEATRES.

NEW-YORK:
SAMUEL FRENCH,

121 NASSAU-STREET.

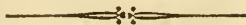
PRICE.

12½ CENTS.

FRENCH'S
AMERICAN DRAMA.

The Acting Edition.

No. XCIX.



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WIFE'S MIRROR:

A

6025

COMEDY, IN ONE ACT.

BY ED. G. P. WILKINS.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

A Description of the Costume—Cast of the Characters—Entrances and Exits—
Relative Positions of the Performers on the Stage, and the whole of the
Stage Business.

AS FIRST PERFORMED AT LAURA KEENE'S VARIETIES, N. Y.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty-Six, by E. G. P. Wilkins,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

NEW-YORK:
SAMUEL FRENCH,
121 NASSAU-STREET.

C. 1856

PS3319
W4M9

Cast of the Characters,—(MY WIFE'S MIRROR.)

Laura Keene's Varieties, N. Y. 1856.

Mr. R. Racket, Mr. Geo. Jordan.

Mr. Pax Peaccable, T. B. Johnson.

Mr. Vingt-un, Howard.

John, Mrs. T's serv't. Carpenter.

Mrs. R. Racket, Miss Laura Keene.

*Mrs. Torpedo, relict
of the late Colonel
Torpedo, of the 1st
Utah Dragoons, }*

Miss Kate Reignolds.

Mary, - Miss McDonough.

Cincinnati, June, 1856.

Mr. Racket, Mr. Mortimer.

Mr. Pax Peaceable, Tannyhill.

Mrs. Racket, Mrs. I. C. Frost.

Mrs. Torpedo, Mrs. W. H. Leighton.

Costumes.—(MY WIFE'S MIRROR.)

MR. RACKET.—*First, Morning dress. Second, Promenade.*

MR. PEACEABLE.—Black suit, white cravat, no beard.

MRS. RACKET.—*First, Morning dress. Second, promenade.*

MRS. TORPEDO.—Modern.

Managers are notified, that by provisions of the Act of Congress, approved August 18, 1856, they are liable to a penalty of not less than \$100 per night, should they play this piece without permission of the author.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

L. means *First Entrance, Left.* R. *First Entrance, Right.* S. E. L. *Second Entrance, Left.* S. E. R. *Second Entrance, Right.* U. E. L. *Upper Entrance, Left.* U. E. R. *Upper Entrance, Right.* C. *Centre.* L. C. *Left of Centre.* R. C. *Right of Centre.* T. E. L. *Third Entrance, Left.* T. E. R. *Third Entrance, Right.* C. D. *Centre Door.* D. R. *Door Right.* D. L. *Door Left.* U. D. L. *Upper Door, Left.* U. D. R. *Upper Door, Right.*

* * * *The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.*

MY WIFE'S MIRROR.

SCENE I.—*A Breakfast Room, with Garden beyond. In addition to the usual furniture, there should be a practicable Book Case, R., a Table, with breakfast ready set, L., and two Lounges, R. and L., with Work-table in C., covered with books, a China or plaster vase; practicable fire-place.*

Enter RACKET, C. D.

Rac. I'm ferociously hungry. I wonder why the d—l Mrs. R. does not appear. [*Looks at his watch.*] Half past eight! Ah! there was a time when you didn't breakfast at nine o'clock, Mr. Racket!—Great times those, my boy. Club, frequently; station-house, sometimes; no end of whist and whiskey, and—well, that's all over. *Sic transit.* Here I am, five days married to the loveliest of women; I positively adore her!—so ethereal—a sort of crinoline angel. She does come it rather strong on Longfellow. Good gracious, how hungry I am—wonder if she thinks I can breakfast on trochaics—I prefer chops.

Enter Mrs. RACKET, C.

Mrs. Rac. [*Steals behind RACKET, leans on his shoulder, looking in his face.*] O! my love, you are the most faultless of men.

Rac. [*Twirling his moustache.*] Flatterer! [*Aside.*] I wish I had my breakfast.

Mrs. Rac. No, my adored one, I do not flatter. I see you as you really are—of perfect goodness—handsome as Apöllo—chaste as Adonis—a mind of angelic sweetness—virtuous as a sermon—poetic as the editor of the Home Journal—ethereal as—

Enter MARY, C.

Mary. Breakfast, madam.

Rac. Thank Heaven!

Mrs. Rac. Disgusting interruption! Serve it. [*They sit at the breakfast table; RACKET, L., attempting, but without success, to conceal his enormous appetite, and Mrs. R. looking at him with wonder and alarm.*] Was not that literary soiree of the Dusenberys a splendid affair! How you enjoyed it!

Rac. Yes—delicious—splendid—so intellectual. [*Aside.*] The most villanous apology for supper that I ever saw. Coffee, if you please!

Mrs. Rac. I had such a splendid chat with that beautiful Graphnapkinzen.

Rac. Grab what ?

Mrs. Rac. Not Grab—Graph—Graphknapkinzen—formerly editor of the——

Rac. Have another chop ?

Mrs. Rac. No, thank you—editor of the Slykinhabgerbatz Demokrat. He was exiled for his——

Rac. Awful butchery.

Mrs. Rac. What ?

Rac. Oh ! I meant the chops !

Mrs. Rac. Exiled for his attachment to the popular cause, and now he seeks in a foreign land——

Rac. [*To MARY.*] Spoons !

Mrs. Rac. Seeks in a foreign land that repose beneath the tree of liberty which was denied him in his own—and where he hopes to taste——

Rac. Sausages !

Mrs. Rac. Don't you like the German type of character, my dear ?

Rac. Infinitely, my dear. [*Aside.*] I can't read a word of it.

Mrs. Rac. If there had been no Germany we should have had no Goethe.

Rac. No lager bier.

Mrs. Rac. No Sorrows of Werter.

Rac. No Limburg cheese.

Mrs. Rac. No Carl Von Weber.

Rac. No Max Maretzek.

Mrs. Rac. No Beethoven.

Rac. No symphonies in XX Minor.

Mrs. Rac. No sonatas in G.

Rac. No Gottschalk.

Mrs. Rac. No soirees—no matinees.

Rac. No hand organs.

Mrs. Rac. Where they play such delicious things—so dreamy.

Rac. [*Aside.*] Yes ! I always go to sleep.

Mrs. Rac. So metaphysical that no one can understand what they mean.

Rac. That is a recommendation, my love.

[*They come down.* *MRS. R.* takes a book from the table, and sits reading on lounge, R. ; *MR. RACKET* takes the *Art of Cookery* slyly out of his pocket, and commences reading also.

Mrs. Rac. [*Raising her head.*] What are you reading, my love ?

Rac. [*Reading.*] Ah ! yes—what am I reading ? [*Confused.*] Well it is—that is, it isn't——[*Aside.*] What the d—l shall I say ? Don't you know what my favorite authors are ?

Mrs. Rac. It is a volume of poems—Longfellow or Walt Whitman ?

Rac. Longfellow. What a stunner !

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Rac. I thought so ! You choose the delicate, heavenly aspirations of the American Tennyson—the sweet bard of fancy—because his inspired mind claims kindred with your own. How deliciously you used to read poetry. Read for me a little of *Endymion*. You will—

will you? It will remind me of those happy hours when I met you first; when we paced the breezy colonnades at Long Branch together, and drank in the incense——

Rac. Of bad cigars.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Rac. Read, my love.

Rac. [*Aside.*] Here goes for a coup d'etat. I think we had better take a walk. [Conceals the book in his pocket.

Mrs. Rac. Oh no! I insist upon the reading.

Rac. [*Aside.*] What am I to do!—when one has been married only a week, one must obey. My love, I've lost the book.

Mrs. Rac. Oh, no, you've not—you put it in your pocket.

Rac. [*Aside.*] Well, if I must—necessitat, and so forth—I think I remember a bit of Endymion. [Opens the book and pretends to read.

The rising moon has hid the stars,
Her level rays, like golden bars,
Lie on the landscape green
With shadows brown between,
And silver-white the river gleams,
As if Diana—Diana—Di—Di—

—[*Aside.*] Dem, di's! [*Closes book.*] Excuse me, my love, I'm a little hoarse.

Mrs. Rac. Oh, no; your voice is so pure, so tender—it is absolutely tearful!

Rac. As if Diana—Diana—[opens book very much confused]—to make beef-steaks with mushroom sauce!

Mrs. Rac. [*Running to him and snatching the book from his hands.*] What are you reading?

Rac. What a fool I was!

Mrs. Rac. Good gracious!—oh, dear!—it is the Cookery Book!

Rac. [*With expression.*] Yes, *ma petite bijou*, it is the Cookery Book, the most useful as well as the most entertaining of publications. After all, my love, marriage is only a community of defects: we sit down to eat the dinner of life together—you take the etherials and I take the solids—you send me the venison-steaks, and I will allow you to feed continually on Charlotte of Russia. I avow it, I am a gourmand—you worship Longfellow, I adore Delmonico.

Mrs. Rac. [*Sorrowfully.*] But you may cure yourself. Try a fashionable hotel by the sea-shore, where you get nothing to eat, and the water-cure.

Rac. No, it is too late; and since you know my taste, I will go to your cook and give her my favorite receipts; you, too, will please me by informing yourself, so that you may give her orders, and when we are alone, instead of eternally discussing Goethe and Longfellow, we will pass in review the works of Ude and Soyer and the mighty masters of the culinary art. Farewell; I will go and order a dinner to my taste. [Exit (c), reading book.

Mrs. Rac. [*Sobbing—seated c.*] Oh, how miserable I am! This is my poetic husband!—my angel!—my divine perfection of a man!—

oh, what's this ? [*Takes up book from lounge she has been reading, and reads aloud.*] "The Legend of the Devil's Mirror. Beelzebub had not yet left the paternal roof, when one day a celebrated tourist arrived in the lower regions, and, with his grand accounts of foreign parts, inspired Beelzebub with the idea of travelling. He set out upon the subterranean railroad and naturally visited New York, where some of his family had high places in the city government. He directed his steps towards the Park to pay his respects to Satan, who lived in a large building with a marble facade called the City Hall. As he walked along Broadway, all the New Yorkers laughed. He was surprised and irritated. Beelzebub thought himself an Adonis ! He had never looked in a mirror, but his cousin Ashtaroth took him to a shop where looking-glasses were sold. Beelzebub uttered a cry of horror ; the mirror reproduced exactly all his imperfections !—his flaming, diabolical glances, and his frightful red beard. Beelzebub softened the fire of his eyes, put his beard into the hands of Phalon, became elegant, wore tight trousers, and was admitted into the best society, and cultivated by Brown. The defects shown to him by his faithful mirror, needed only to be seen to be corrected." Well, that gives me an idea ; I will be my husband's mirror. I will copy his defects exactly in order to correct them. I will be the devil's mirror ! La Bruyere says that the heart of a woman is like a mirror, receiving an impression from every object, but retaining none. I'll make his sarcasm a fact.

Enter MR. RACKET (c).—MRS RACKET runs up to him smiling.

Mrs. Rac. Well, *mon ami*, have you ordered an artistic repast ?

Rac. [*Surprised.*] How does that interest you ?

Mrs. Rac. How ! Did you not say that marriage was only a community of defects ? Well, I am somewhat of an epicure.

Rac. [*Disgusted.*] Bah ! you who are so spirituelle—so poetic—so charming—[*gaily*—for I own, without flattery, I could not have found a more delightful little wife.

Mrs. Rac. Have you ordered a large eel pie ?

Rac. [*Tenderly.*] My dear Susan, I desire to speak seriously ; to you I have devoted my life —

Mrs. Rac. And baked potatoes ?

Rac. [*L. Impatiently*] Let the dinner go to the d—l. I was telling you [*tenderly*] that to you I had devoted a life of eternal tenderness. I shall never forget our first interview—it is a memory full of enchantment and sweetness —

Mrs. Rac. (R) With butter sauce ?

Rac. [*Irritated.*] Why pour butter sauce over our love ! It seems to me [*reproachfully*] that you no longer love me, and I relied so much on your affection ! But it is mine for life—for life, is it not ? By little attentions, I hope to preserve it always.

Mrs. Rac. Like hermetically sealed lobsters. *Apropos* of lobsters, I saw some in Centre Market, yesterday. Can't we have some salad for dinner ?

Rac. This is disgusting.

MARY passes c. d. with dish.

Mrs. Rac. [*Jumping up and running to MARY—returns with a large piece of pie, which she eats voraciously—to MR. RACKET.*] You were saying [*mouth full*] some-something about our af-fec-tion.—Oh, how nice this pie is!

Rac. [*Who has been striding about the room bursting with rage.*] Stop, madam! It is my duty to tell you the truth! You are, madam, frightfully ugly when you talk in that manner, with your mouth full.

Mrs. Rac. [*Affecting to sob, but laughing behind the pie.*] This is the first time you have ever reproved me—you're a brute—you've made your wife's pie wet with your wife's tears, and it don't taste good—you're a monster—that's what you are. I never knew you to scold me before.

Rac. [*Coldly.*] I never knew of your defect before.

Mrs. Rac. It is not a defect—it is only an infirmity—we all have them. I have a voracious appetite.

Rac. But, madam, I like only slender and delicate women. Horrible thought—you will become fat!

Mrs. Rac. But I will if I choose.

Rac. [*Threatening.*] Then we will be two. I never can live with a fat woman; bah!

Mrs. Rac. I have a right to become as fat as I like. The Code does not forbid it; it is not a legal ground for divorce. Ask O'Conor!

Rac. Come, my dear Susan, listen to me. It would be cruel to have this disenchantment begin only a week after marriage. If you desire to please me, you will avoid this perpetual conversation about cooking, and you will cure yourself of gluttony; it is a vulgar, repulsive, disgraceful defect, which drove Adam and Eve out of their paradise, and will drive us out of ours!

Mrs. Rac. Indeed! But you cultivate this sin. However, if it displeases you, I will promise to correct it; but be careful not to set me the example. If you read the cookery book, I shall have a relapse, and that is always more serious than the first attack.

Rac. Ah! that terrible volume! [*Takes up book.*] See! here I consign it to the flames! [*Throws it in the fireplace.—They embrace—Grand tableau of reconciliation.*]

Enter MARY with letters—Gives one to MRS. RACKET, and one to MR. RACKET, who goes R. and reads. [*Exit MARY.*]

Rac. [*Reads.*]

"SIR,—I accept the verbal challenge, given by you, yesterday, and
"my friend, Sniff Kin, of the 369th Regiment, New York State Mi-
"lita, will meet any friend of yours, and arrange preliminaries. pre-
"paratory to my doing myself the honor of blowing out your brains.

"In the words of Marey to Palmerston, receive the assurances of my
"distinguished consideration.

"PAX PEACEABLE.

"THE UNION CLUB, }
"Monday Morning." }

Rac. So here's something I do like—I'll go at once. Here, boots, coat, every thing. [*Embraces Mrs. R. and runs out.*]

Mrs. Rac. [*Reading at the same time—Exits to be nearly simultaneous.*]

“General Order No. 1.

“MY DEAR,—Are you under arrest, and obliged to stay at home? I hope you are not kept in Barracks by your husband. I think the wife should command the post. But come and see me. Bring your heart, and your crotchet-work—no ceremony! fatigue dress. All I ask is, when I pass you in review, let your friendship be strong enough to defy the closest inspection. Come at Two and you shall see the Seventh Regiment, the elite corps of our beautiful garrison of New York, parade.

(Signed)

“ALEXANDRINA TORPEDO.”

Mrs. Rac. Here, Marianne, my cloak and hat, it's nearly two—order the carriage—no, I'll take the stage. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Boudoir of Mrs. TORPEDO.*

Enter Mrs. TORPEDO, R., humming the Ratapla, music in the Daughter of the Regiment, and imitating drum beat, a la Albou.

Mrs. Torpedo. Bravo! Splendid company that Light Guard! What would Broadway be without Dodworth, and the Twelfth Regiment? I should like to kiss them all, especially the Pioneers. I like to cultivate a taste for the militia. It preserves the public peace, and makes Broadway look pretty—sets up target companies, encourages the plated cake-basket trade, and is the best school of the soldier—not that the cavalry is equal to the Utah dragoons, when we commanded them. Oh, those were jolly times.

Enter JOHN, giving military salute, and card.

Mrs. Tor. Ah! It's that Pax! [*To JOHN*] Let him approach—right about face, march! I think I'll have to marry that man.

Enter PAX, hurriedly—Drops hat and cane.

Pax. [*Diffidently, but not stuttering.*] I—I—I've d—d—done it!

Mrs. Tor. You've done it. What?

Pax. (L.) Oh, I've cha—ch—ch—challenged—h—him!

Mrs. Tor. Oh! yes; that little affair in Broadway, yesterday. Well, you'll kill him, of course, and then we'll be off to Canada.

Pax. Y—y—yes; but—but—

Enter Mrs. RACKET, L.—Runs up to Mrs. TORPEDO, and embraces her violently.

Mrs. Tor. There! Recover! [*Holds her out at arm's length.*] Stand at ease. [*Looks at her watch.*] Five minutes past two; you will consider yourself under arrest. Well, how's the husband?

Mrs. Rack. (R) O, beautiful—such a dear! Such—

Mrs. Tor. (L.) Ah! you've been married only a week, that's plain enough; but you will allow me, my child, to continue my examination of a subject in which I take a profound interest. This gentleman has

just confessed to me that he has an affair of honor. He knows that these things charm me. When one has commanded the Utah dragoons, one may espouse, for the second time, a man who is willing to prove his courage on the field of honor.

Mrs. Rack. So this gentleman——

Mrs. Tor. Is my intended, whom I have the honor to introduce to you. Mr. Peaceable, I present you to my dear friend, Mrs. Racket.

[PAX shakes hand, and takes c.]

Mrs. Rack. [To MRS. TORPEDO.] But are you not afraid?

Mrs. Tor. Afraid! no, the duel decides me. Mr. Peaceable has a thousand good qualities, but we have commanded the Utah dragoons, while Mr. Peaceable is in the civil service of the United States, a weigher and guager in the custom-house, and an original Buchanan man; and he is so unfortunate as never to have had the slightest quarrel with any one.

Mrs. Rack. But I think that is a great merit. I am married to the most amiable and peaceable man in the world. He is merciful even to the mosquitoes!

Pax. (c.) So—so—am—I.

Mrs. Tor. [To PAX.] Silence, sir; no talking in the ranks. [To MRS. RACKET.] My child, if he is so peaceable, you ought to send him to Barnum, to retrieve his fallen fortunes, or ship him to Paris, for the conference. [To PAX.] According to your account, the person—I don't know his name—whom we have called out must be a bully, for he——

Pax. I'll t—t—tell you—[Stutters.]—all about it. I was coming down Broadway, when two ladies were coming up: they had very great hoops, and crowded me to the wall, when he endeavored to pass me with his dog; the dog got between my legs—I trod on his tail—dog run under ladies' hoop—lady disgusted—policeman poked dog out with sticks—great crowd—people laughed—he very indignant—said I had mutilated his dog—demanded I should apologize to the dog—couldn't do it—he threw his hat at me—soon after, heard something drop—station-house—Judge—policeman—five dollars—blood—that's all!

Mrs. Rack. Horrid wretch——

Mrs. Tor. And that's enough! a most deadly insult. When we were commanding the Utah dragoons, the Colonel of the Arkansas rifles said we were a no such thing. We fought in a trench, six feet long, three feet wide, and four feet deep! with Colt's revolvers, pioneer's axes, and two four-pound howitzers, lent us in the most gentlemanly manner by Captain Bragg, of the regulars. We were wounded, but all of ours called out all of the Arkansas rifles; and such was the havoc, that their junior Second Lieutenant, who had the fever and couldn't come out, became Colonel of the regiment.

Mrs. Rack. What brutes!

Pax. [Frightened.] But the bloodshed in duels is what displeases me. I might have a scar.

Mrs. Tor. Never mind, a scar is an honorable decoration. I trust you will return from the field of honor with your arm in a sling; I shall then receive you as the Spartan women would have greeted Leonidas, if he had ever returned. I shall say, receive O Pax, my hand—it is yours, to console you, and especially to take care of you.

Pax. I'm exceedingly obliged—[*Aside.*—and exceeding frightened.

Mrs. Rac. But I cannot see why you should fight. This is a civilized community. We are not in California; one can walk out here without a Bowie knife. Your adversary, sir, must be one of your bitterest enemies.

Pax. O bless your soul, no—nothing of the kind; he is one of my best friends; but he is proud and passionate—awfully so. Went to college with him. He used to punch the heads of the entire police, and was rusticated for shying champagne bottles at the president's head. We used to call him Robert, the Devil.

Mrs. Rack. [*Astonished.*] Robert!

Pax. Yes, madam—Robert Racket!

Mrs. Rack. Good heavens! my husband!

Pax. Her husband! Goodness gracious.

Mrs. Tor. Her husband! Gracious goodness.

Mrs. Rac. [*Weeping to PAX.*] Oh! sir, I entreat you to relinquish this duel; run away—go to—

Pax. With p—p—leas—

[*Crosses to L.*

Mrs. Tor. [*To PAX.*] Silence! sir. Eyes right. [*To MRS. RACKET.*] Take courage, my dear, it is terrible! but it is a point of honor.

Pax. [*Courageously—Crosses to R.*] It is a point of honor!

Mrs. Rac. [*To PAX. She speaks savagely, and he shrinks from her.*] But this point of honor pierces the heart of a woman. When is it to be?

Pax. To-morrow—seven A. M.—Weehawken.

Mrs. Rac. Then I will prevent it. I will run home and talk to Robert. I will soften him with my tears! He is as gentle as a lamb—a dove.

[*Runs out c. L.*

Pax. [*Aside.*] Yes, as a lamb in a rage, and a dove in a high fever!

Mrs. Tor. Now, sir, for our pistol practice.

[*Exit, R., marching—saying, as he steps—left, left, &c.*

SCENE III.—*Same as Scene I.—Case of Pistols on table, U. E. L. Trick dove to fall at pistol shot.*

Enter RACKET, c.

Rac. Well, everything must be ready by this time for our little affair to-morrow. I don't hardly think Pax will come to taw, though he does write so ferociously. If he don't, then it is nose pulling, and—

Enter MRS. RACKET, c., throws off her bonnet, and runs to RACKET.

Rac. (L.) Why, my love, your bonnet is farther off your head than ever, and there is no occasion for that with the present fashion. What's the matter?

Mrs. Rac. (R.) [*Leads RACKET down to the foot-lights—looks earnestly in his face.*] Tell me, my love, have you not the amiability of an angel?

Rac. [*Laughs.*] What a queer question.

Mrs. Rac. It is a serious one. Listen! Are you not peaceable?

Rac. As General Pierce!

Mrs. Rac. Then why, sir, are you going to fight a duel to-morrow?

Rac. Me fight a duel—well what then? How did you find it out?

Mrs. Rac. Never mind! I will oppose it. [*Seizes pistols.*] I will stop it, as the border ruffians treat the Massachusetts abolitionists; I seize your arms.

Rac. Oh! that's of no consequence. The seconds bring the arms.

Mrs. Rac. [*Excited*] What are you about to do? I implore you to think of it. You would shoot your college friend. The man who presses your hand cannot tread upon your dog's tail without your cutting his throat.

Rac. [*In a rage.*] Silence, madam! You know nothing of these things. I tell you I was insulted, laughed at, and all for that miserable fellow. I am not calm, I am not peaceable, I am not the Broadway lounge, the quiet Sybarite you think me. No, I have fought several duels, and killed my man when I was abroad. You call me a bully. Well, a bully let it be, then; but every time an insulting word has been whispered in my ears, I have sent a bullet at the ears of the insolent fellow who uttered it. This Pax I will kill—I will have his blood.

Mrs. Rac. [*Imploringly.*] Now, my dear Robert, compose yourself. Think if he should kill you, I should die also; and if you conquer him, you will have murdered a poor young man, who seems full of gentleness.

Rac. No, he is an infamous wretch, and I'll smash him as I do this vase.

[*Takes China vase from table, and throws on the stage, stamping with his feet.*]

Mrs. Rac. This then is the angel I have chosen. [*Weeps.*] I will try the mirror again. [*Goes to him and shakes his hand vigorously.*] It is well, Robert; you have stood the test.

Rac. [*Astonished.*] Stood what?

Mrs. Rac. The test, I had prepared for you. If you had consented, like a common-place man, to sacrifice yourself for your wife, I should have despised you. Heaven has made us for each other. I burned with anger, when I heard of the insult. He dare to tread on your dog's tail; you must have his blood! blood!!

Rac. [*Stupified.*] Mirabile dictu!

Mrs. Rac. Oh! how I wish I was a man! I would be your second. I would abuse every one I did not like, and shoot them afterwards. I would walk Broadway in the middle of the pave, and bully all the stage-drivers. If any one looked askance at me—blood! If any one touched my elbow—blood! I would have been a brave man.

Rac. Yes! like the parsons, who give away rifles in church, you would have made yourself supremely ridiculous.

Mrs. Rac. [*Joyously.*] Do you think so? You will not fight, then.

Rac. But I will. I never recoiled from an affair of honor.

Mrs. Rac. Well, then I will be worthy of you. [*Takes up pistol.*] Do you know that I can shoot. We used to do it every day at Newport. I can ring the bell three times out of five. I could blow out a man's brains.

[*Goes up to the window.*]

Rac. [*Aside.*] Women have nothing to do with brains.

Mrs. Rac. Reply, Oh, Lion! Are you satisfied with your Lioness?

Rac. I prefer to lie down with the lamb. But since you have taken up your character of lioness, you no longer oppose the duel, and to-morrow——

Mrs. Rac. [*At the window.*] To-morrow. Do you see that dove yonder? Well, if I were in your place, I would aim at that insolent fellow, as I aim [*Aims pistol.*] at that dove, and would kill him, as I am going to kill that bird. [*Fires, bird falls.*]

Rac. [*Much affected.*] Madam, this is infamous. To kill a turtle-dove—the symbol of fidelity. What had this poor bird done to you? See how he suffers; how he struggles against death. His family were perhaps expecting him at the dove-cote! He had his little home, where he was beloved—his heaven, where he was free. He falls—he is dead! and why? Because a woman has chosen to exhibit her address. No, it is not a woman. It is a tigress!

Mrs. Rac. Ah! You reproach me, for having fired upon a bird, while you are going to kill the friend of your childhood. I ask you, what has he done to you? Has he insulted your wife, or profaned the memory of your mother? No, he has simply given a pin-scratch to your vanity, and this vanity replies by a pistol. You may think yourself a man of courage, but I tell you that a man of true courage is he who devotes himself to his friends, not he who kills them. I implore you, renounce this duel.

Rac. You have learned me a good lesson. But I cannot now recede. I would if it were possible, without being accused of cowardice.

Enter MARY with card, gives it to MRS. RACKET.

Mrs. Rac. What! Peaceable, so soon. It is to-morrow.

Rac. You see it is no longer in my hands.

Enter PAX.

Pax. [*To RACKET.*] Sir, [*Stutters*] I have anticipated the dreadful moment. You insulted me, sir, and my duty is——

Rac. To fight me, eh?

Mrs. Rac. [*To PAX, seizing him by the hand.*] Oh! Mr. Peaceable, do not kill him.

Pax. [*Placing his hand on his heart, and taking a melo-dramatic attitude.*] Be calm! I am incapable of it, madam. I have been thinking that I have an important duty to fulfil.

Rac. What!

Pax. [*Solemnly.*] A duty to humanity. This morning I met Mrs. Racket, her grief affected me deeply; I am not a monster. I am not a grizzly bear in human shape, I cannot see a widow and orphans in tears.

Rac. Not an orphan!

Pax. Never mind, there would be a widow; I will not make that splendid creature a widow. I have put an extinguisher upon my anger; I have said to myself I must renounce this duel, from sensibility. My

impetuous disposition at first carried me away, but I thought of your lovely wife and—— [*Extends his hand, RACKET takes it.*]

Rac. [*To PAX.*] And now we are friends again.

[*PAX twirls his hat and looks very foolish.*]

Rac. Well, my boy, what's the matter now?

Pax. Do you know Mrs. Alexandrina Torpedo?

Rac. No! What sort of a woman is she?

Pax. Splendid creature—sort of Juno, and all that sort of thing—widow of a Colonel in the Utah Dragoons—passion for bowie knives. My heart is enrolled in her regiment—I fight under her colors—that is, I don't fight—and as she was very anxious for me to fight, I will be particularly obliged to you if you won't mention the strong proof of moral courage I have just given you.

Rac. [*Laughing.*] I promise it.

Pax. Let it be understood, then, we have fought.

Rac. To the death!

Pax. No, not to the death, exactly, as we are both alive, that would be slightly improbable. But if I could give her some proof—a scratch, a scar——

Rac. [*Taking up his pistol.*] All right, old fellow. Stand over there, and I'll wing you beautifully.

Pax. [*Frightened.*] Oh! no—no—no jokes——

Rac. I have it, Mr. Peaceable. Nothing will look so well as to have your arm in a sling. [*Produces black silk handkerchief.*] Present yourself to the Colonel's widow thus, and I am confident she will say here is my hand for your arm. [*Binds his arm.*] It belongs to the ladies to look after the wounded. There you are, my Cæsar. Remember I have your secret—if I should tell her——

Pax. Good heavens!

Rac. Don't be afraid! Be discreet, and I will be silent. But if I want you, you are my slave.

Pax. I swear it.

Enter MRS. TORPEDO, hurriedly.

Mrs. Tor. [*Seeing PAX.*] Ah! has it come off?

Mrs. Rac. Oh! yes—no great harm done. He has a slight wound.

[*PAX and MRS. TORPEDO speak aside.*]

Pax. [*Smiling.*] I have the honor to announce to you my approaching marriage—I have enlisted.

Mrs. Rac. In the Utah Dragoons?

Mrs. Tor. Precisely.

Rac. [*Aside.*] Poor fellow, it would have been better for him if I had shot him.

Mrs. Rac. Two hearts bound together with black silk. Charming spectacle.

Enter MR. VINGT-UN, bows to the Ladies.

Vingt-un. I am sorry to break up this delightful quartette——

[*MR. RACKET makes telegraphic signs to him to stop.*]

And particularly, madam, I beg pardon for taking away your husband, but he is engaged to our circle at the club, and is an hour behind time.

Mrs. Rac. Ah! yes, the club—delightful place, no doubt. But why don't you have ladies in your circle? It must be terribly dull.

Pax. [*Looking at MRS. TORPEDO*] Yes! like a night without stars. What! is there no place for the better half of humanity?

Vingt-un. [*Not noticing RACKET, whose signals increase in vigor.*] Oh! yes; we constantly have the Queen of Diamonds, the Queen of Hearts, the Duchess of Spades, and the Marchioness of Clubs.

Mrs. Rac. [*To MR. R.*] So you pass those nights in gambling which you told me were spent at the bed-side of your sick uncle. [*To VINGT-UN.*] Is it true?

Vingt-un. It is as you say.

Mrs. Rac. [*With affected gaiety.*] And do you play high?

Vingt-un. Not very. Racket lost, however, ten thousand to a gentleman from Mississippi the other night.

Mrs. Rac. [*To RACKET.*] Is it possible?

Rac. [*With decision.*] Yes! I am rich, I can afford it. Let us go, *Vingt-un.* Hurrah for the card table!

Mrs. Rac. Yes! Hurrah for the card table. [*Rings bell—enter servant.*] Mary, a table and cards. [*MARY brings down table and exits.*] Play, gentlemen, not at the club, but here. I will join in the game.

Rac. You!

Mrs. Rac. Yes! I am passionately fond of gambling—I love a green table studded with gold and notes as the turf with daisies. I love to pass the night with my eyes fixed on a set of senseless pictures invented to amuse an idiot, and used to make idiots of sensible men. Decidedly, my love, we were made for each other.

Rac. [*Aside.*] So I have married a glutton and a gambler. *Mem.*—suspect marriageable young ladies, especially poetic blondes.

[*He sits down and deals the cards, playing with VINGT-UN.*]

Mrs. Rac. I will bet a thousand dollars on my husband.

Rac. What an extravagant little wretch!

Mrs. Rac. Come, make the game—who takes my bet?

Mrs. Tor. Not I! I abhor all gambling, except chess, and that represents a combat. [*Sternly to PAX.*] I am glad you never play. I never would have consented to marry a gambler.

Mrs. Rac. Mr. Peaceable, will you take my bet?

Pax. Thank you; I never play except with the small sword, and I am not yet very strong.

Mrs. Rac. [*Takes him aside.*] Bet against me, or I will tell her about the scarf. [*Whispers in his ear.*]

Pax. Great heavens! I take the bet.

Mrs. Tor. I shall burst with rage!

Rac. [*To VINGT-UN.*] You win.

Mrs. Rac. [*To PAX.*] And so do you.

Rac. [*To VINGT-UN.*] Shall we double the stakes?

Vingt-un. With pleasure.

Mrs. Rac. [*To PAX.*] I will bet you two thousand on my husband; and in addition, I will bet you my carriage and pair against your horse and Rockaway.

Mrs. Tor. [*To PAX.*] If you take that bet, I will never speak to you again as long as I live

Mrs. Rac. Come, sir, I am waiting.

Rac. [To *Mrs. R.*] This is madness! One would think you had been cradled on a faro-table.

Mrs. Rac. What, my love, are you not charmed to see me sympathize with your tastes? [To *Pax.*] How long must I wait for you, sir?

Pax. Madam. I cannot take that bet; I have nothing. I ——

Mrs. Rack. Very well, sir; how is your wound ——

Pax. I will take the bet.

Rac. [Irritated] I have lost again! The cards are bewitched. We will double the stakes again.

Mrs. Rack. And I will bet my country-house on the Hudson.

Rac. Madam, you will ruin me! Leave the room!

Mrs. Tor. [Looking at *Pax.*] I'll tear your eyes out!

Pax. [To *Mrs. R.*] Madam, I have nothing to bet with. I have only a lodging-room in the Fourth Avenue.

Mrs. Rack. Very well. By the way, where do you buy your black silk scarfs?

Pax. [Hastily.] I forget; I have four lots on Murray Hill. I will take the bet.

Rac. I have lost seven thousand dollars!

Vingt-un. [Going out.] And I have won them!

Rac. [To *Mrs. R.*] You are mad, woman! Our carriage—our country-house—all are lost! What can be more odious than a female gambler! You are positively horrid—your rosy cheeks have become yellow—your bright eyes are haggard! Looking at you has disgusted me with gambling. I will never touch another card.

Mrs. Rac. You are then cured?

Rac. [Secretly.] What is it to you, since I am about to quit you forever? I will not live with a gambler!

Mrs. Rac. Are you going?

Mrs. Tor. [To *Pax.*] And I will never marry a gambler. Adieu, sir.

Pax. [Aside to *Mrs. RACKET.*] It is time to justify ourselves.

Mrs. Rac. [To *Mr. R.*] So you desire a separation?

Rac. I am resolved upon it! [Aside.] Poor thing!

Mrs. Rac. Then I must take a decided step. [Walks up stage.

Rack. Good heavens! she is going to throw herself out of the window! [Mrs. RACKET sits at centre table, and begins to read.

Mrs. Tor. Well, that is cool!

Pax. As if it was iced!

Rac. What, do you have the courage to sit down tranquilly and read when I have announced that I am about to part from you forever! Your frightful defects have destroyed all our happiness, and you are as stolid as an iceberg.

Mrs. Rac. Listen! [Reads from book.] “Beelzebub, who had never seen himself in a glass, looked one day in a Venetian mirror, and uttered a cry of terror. The mirror copied exactly all his imperfections!—his flaming eyes, and his frightful red beard. He softened the fire of his eyes, put himself into the hands of some Broadway artists, became

charming, elegant, and fashionable ; for the defects shown him by his faithful friend the mirror had all disappeared."

Rac. What does it mean ?

Mrs. Rac. It means, my love, that I have been your mirror. I am not a glutton nor a gambler. Our betting was a humbug. You [*to* MRS. TORPEDO] can marry Mr. Peaceable ; he is not a gambler, and is as brave as a lion. [*RACKET embraces her.*] I have corrected you of your faults, for the devil did not think himself handsome when he looked in the mirror.

Rac. [*Shakes hands with* MRS. R.] I acknowledge the corn. And now that every thing is settled, let's celebrate the event by a *fête*.

All. Agreed !

Mrs. Rac. To the Varieties !

Mrs. Tor. I am going to the Tabernacle, to the Anniversary of the Society for the Spread of Sharpe's Rifles, Colt's Revolvers—

Mr. Peaceable. Schiedam Schnapps—

Mrs. Tor. And true religion all over the world. The exercises are refreshingly warlike.

Rac. Very likely ! But we not being philanthropically inclined, will go to the theatre.

Vingt-un. And I, not being theatrically inclined, will go to the Club, where we hold the mirror up to nature through the medium of a full pack.

Mrs. Rac. As Wallack says, in Jaques—"So to your pleasures."—Well, are we all ready—hat, gloves, my lorgnette—all right ?

Rac. Go!

[*They all go up.*]

Mrs. Rac. [*To* MR. RAC.] Have'nt you forgotten something ?

Rac. [*Looking about him.*] I believe I'm all right—what's the row.

Mrs. Rac. [*Brings RACKET down.*] Why some of our friends [*looking at audience*] may expect some moral reflections.

Rac. From our Mirror—ah, yes, beg pardon. I did forget that interesting ceremony. You'd better do it. They rather like you—and it is your mirror. Pitch them something *a la* Hiawatha.

Mrs. Rac. [*To audience, solemnly.*]

If you ask me whence this farce is,

Whence this furor of My Wife's Mirror,

I should answer—I should tell you—

All. Oh ! Oh !

[*Laugh.*]

Mrs. Rac. [*To* PAX.] Well, Achilles, you try it.

Pax. [*With dignity.*] Ladies and gentlemen, the moral of this piece is—

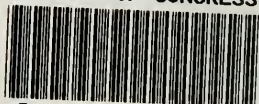
[*All laugh.*]

Rac. Oh, that'll never do—nobody cares about morals, now-a-days, except political editors, when they desire to pitch into an opponent. [*To audience.*] My wife requests me to show you—no—that is, yes—I mean that our mirror will be exhibited every night.

Mrs. Rac. And, ladies, if there are any of you that have fast husbands, try the soothing system, and take a look at—

Rac. MY WIFE'S MIRROR.

THE END.



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